



Background

Last month, the House of Representatives debated funding for the Department of Defense. Congressman Blumenauer joined several colleagues, both Democrats and Republicans, in voicing grave concerns about the continued U.S. presence in Afghanistan. Our brave men and women remain in harm's way, while the cost to taxpayers continues to grow.

To date, over 2080 soldiers have died in Afghanistan and countless others have been wounded. The impact of this war on these individuals and their families will be felt for decades to come.

Additionally, since the 9/11 attacks, the United States has spent \$1.3 trillion directly on war operations, including almost \$500 billion in Afghanistan, with \$113 billion in the current fiscal year alone and another \$107 billion authorized for next year. This doesn't include the additional \$530 billion we'll spend on the Pentagon's base budget this year.

America can no longer afford to be spending \$10 billion every month – over \$200,000 a minute – in Afghanistan on a strategy that is not in line with our strategic interests in the region.

Solution

Congressman Blumenauer has called for a rapid withdrawal of all troops from Afghanistan. The United States intervened in Afghanistan to destroy al Qaeda's safe haven, remove the Taliban government that sheltered al Qaeda, and pursue those who planned the September 11th attacks on the United States. These objectives have largely been met.

Yet today we find ourselves in an ill-defined war with no clear path forward, and American lives continuing to be at risk in support of the unreliable Karzai regime. The \$480 million per month we're spending on development aid is falling victim to waste and corruption, and too little is reaching the Afghan people who desperately need it. What the Afghans really want are trusted local and national government institutions, and only they can bring about that change. Ultimately the future of Afghanistan is in the hands of its own people.

It's unconscionable to continue to fund this war and put our troops in harm's way when we've achieved virtually all that we can. Maintaining an active military force in Afghanistan does not provide any greater security to the United States, nor does it offer any greater opportunity for the people of Afghanistan. Now that we've passed two tragic milestones – perpetuating the longest war in the history of the United States, and the heartbreaking loss of the 2000th US soldier – Congressman Blumenauer believes it is time to eliminate war funding, and bring our men and women home as quickly and as safely as possible.

[<Previous Idea](#)
[Next Idea>](#)

